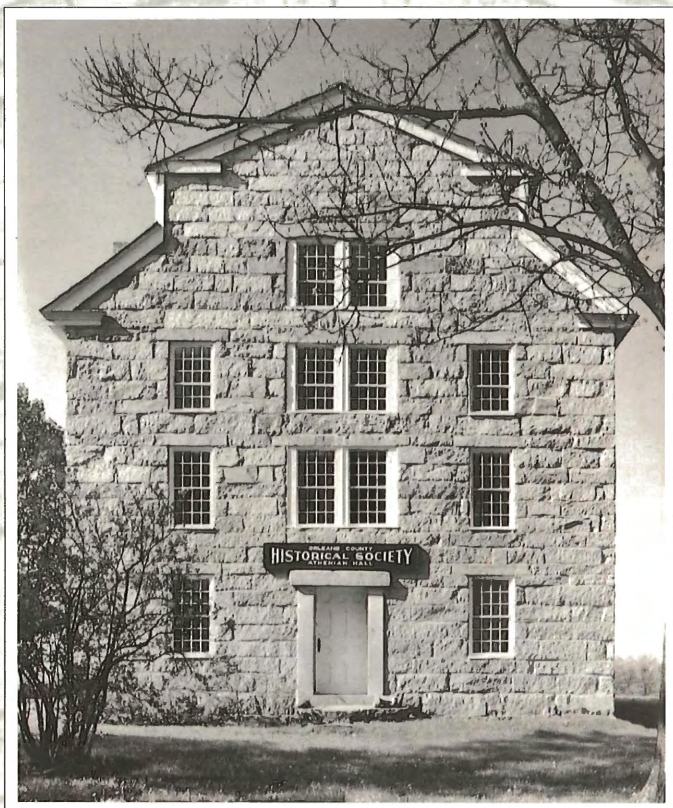


THE OLD STONE HOUSE MUSEUM



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IN THE
BROWNINGTON
HISTORIC DISTRICT

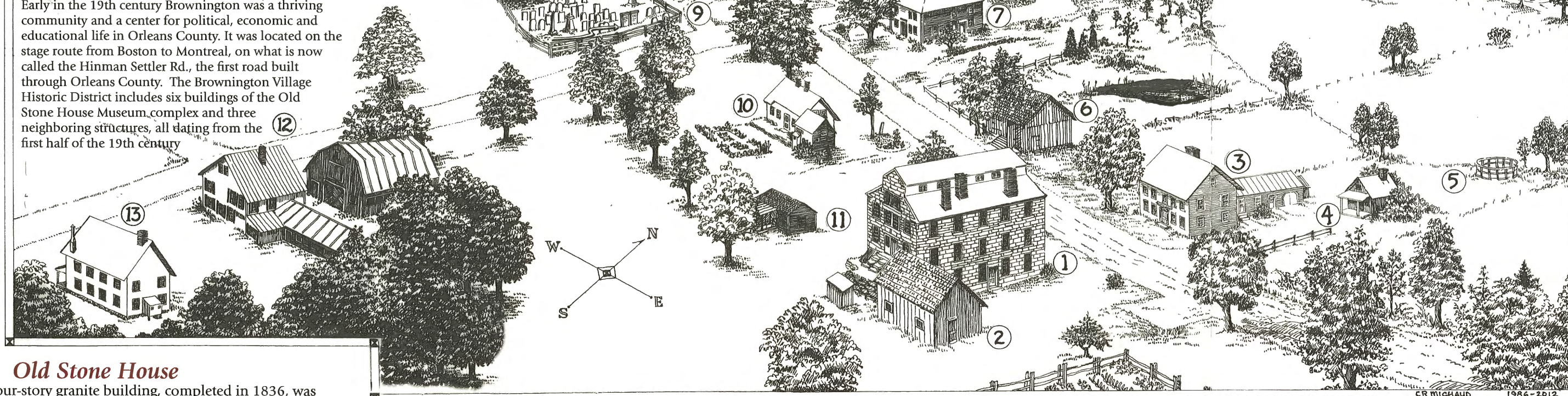
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BROWNINGTON, VERMONT

BROWNINGTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

LISTED IN THE
National Register of Historic Places

Early in the 19th century Brownington was a thriving community and a center for political, economic and educational life in Orleans County. It was located on the stage route from Boston to Montreal, on what is now called the Hinman Settler Rd., the first road built through Orleans County. The Brownington Village Historic District includes six buildings of the Old Stone House Museum complex and three neighboring structures, all dating from the first half of the 19th century



1 Old Stone House

This four-story granite building, completed in 1836, was constructed as a dormitory by Alexander Lucius Twilight, headmaster of the Orleans County Grammar School. Dubbed "Athenian Hall" by its builder, the dormitory was more commonly called the Stone Boarding House, the Stone House and eventually the Old Stone House. For almost a quarter of a century, it housed young scholars. Then in 1859, only two years after Twilight's death, the dormitory closed. Twilight's widow, Mercy Ladd Merrill Twilight, ran a small boarding house and tavern in the Stone House for several years before selling the building and moving to Derby. The Stone House remained in private hands until 1918, when it was purchased by the Orleans County Historical Society for \$500. In 1925 it opened as a museum interpreting the history of the region and its people.

2 Old Stone House Barn

The 25 X 40 timber frame barn was raised in the summer of 2012 on the footprint of the original barn that was constructed just after the Old Stone House was built in 1836, and removed in 1924 before it opened as a museum.

North Country Career Center students helped cut and mill the lumber and built the deck. Elementary students whittled the pegs which anchor the mortise and tenon joints. The Timber Framers Guild cut and raised the frame. The barn now holds an exhibit on the history of farming in Orleans County.

3 Alexander Twilight House & Archival Vault

Across the road from the Old Stone House is the Alexander Twilight House (circa 1830), built only a short time after Twilight and his wife arrived in Brownington. The size of the house enabled the Twilights to board Grammar School students. They continued to board students in their home even after the Stone House was constructed.

The Twilight House later became the property of Stanley Marsh, first caretaker of the Museum, and then of his successor, Ezekiel Perry. Purchased by the Orleans County Historical Society in 1999 from Leon and Mary Perry, the Alexander Twilight House serves as a visitor center for the

Museum and as the Historical Society's main office. It has a handicap accessible restroom. In 2010, on the footprint of the original ell, an archival vault, workroom and ramp entrance were constructed.

4 Blacksmith Shop

The timber frame structure was raised in the summer of 2009 by children from the Old Stone House Museum's Time Travelers Day Camp. The teaching blacksmith shop has a big brick forge, as well as portable forges and anvils that can be set up outside. Classes range from beginning skills through more advanced techniques. At monthly hammer-ins students can practice with guidance from an instructor.

5 Round Horse Pen

In 2008 Orleans County students built a cedar rail pen for horse training demonstrations and to accommodate animals brought in for education programs.

6 Lawrence Barn

This English-style barn, built during the first half of the 19th century, is similar to one originally associated with the Twilight House. The barn was donated to the Museum by the Ruth and Roland Lawrence family of Albany, Vermont, and was moved to its present site in 1997. The barn now houses agricultural equipment, carriages, sleighs, boats, and sugaring and logging equipment.

7 Samuel Read Hall House & Orchard

On the corner is a gold Federal-style house, built in 1831. From 1856 to 1877, it was the home of Samuel Read Hall (1795-1877). Hall briefly served as principal and teacher at the Orleans County Grammar School during the 1850's and was a minister of the Brownington Congregational Church. In 2005 the Historical Society purchased the Hall House from the Herrick family. It is used for the expanding education program, as well as museum and private events.

8 *Prospect Hill & Observatory Tower*

From 1823 until 1869, the classroom building of the Orleans County Grammar School stood at the foot of Prospect Hill on what was then the town common. Students would often climb the hill for evening vespers. In 1898 William Barstow Strong, a Brownington native, a graduate of the Grammar School, and the President of the Atchinson, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, had an observatory tower built at the top of the hill. The tower was recreated by the Grange in 1975 in preparation for the national bicentennial and was rebuilt again in 1998. Visitors can walk or drive up Prospect Hill to the observatory. Views of the surrounding countryside include Willoughby Gap to the Southeast, Lake Memphremagog to the north and Jay Peak to the west. On clear days you can see Mt. Mansfield to the southwest and the White Mountains to the east.

9 *Brownington Congregational Church & Village Cemetery*

The church building was completed in 1841. In 1899, William Barstow Strong, paid for extensive remodeling of the church interior and for a large bell and spire for the belfry.

The grave stones of Alexander and Mercy Twilight are at the front of the church cemetery, facing toward the Old Stone House.

10 *Cyrus Eaton House*

Built in 1834 by Cyrus Eaton, a businessman who emigrated from Canada, this is a late Federal-style house partially remodeled in the vernacular Greek Revival Style. Eaton was a trustee of the Orleans County Grammar School and helped Twilight build the Stone House. Two of Eaton's sons and one daughter were among Twilight's students. In 1971, the Historical Society acquired the Cyrus Eaton House from Alan Lafoe. The building now houses a research library and changing exhibits. Behind the house is a mid-19th century perennial garden, created and maintained by the Four Seasons Garden Club.

11 *Museum Education Center*

Originally part of an ell connecting the Twilight House to a small barn, the Education Center was given to the Historical Society by the Perry family in 1978 and moved into the field beside the Old Stone House. The Education Program now serves an estimated 1500 schoolchildren and adults each year with a variety of on-site and outreach offerings.

12 *Rice & Going Hotel*

Built in 1815, this farmhouse once operated as the Rice and Going Hotel. The house is privately owned today.

13 *Orleans County Grammar School*

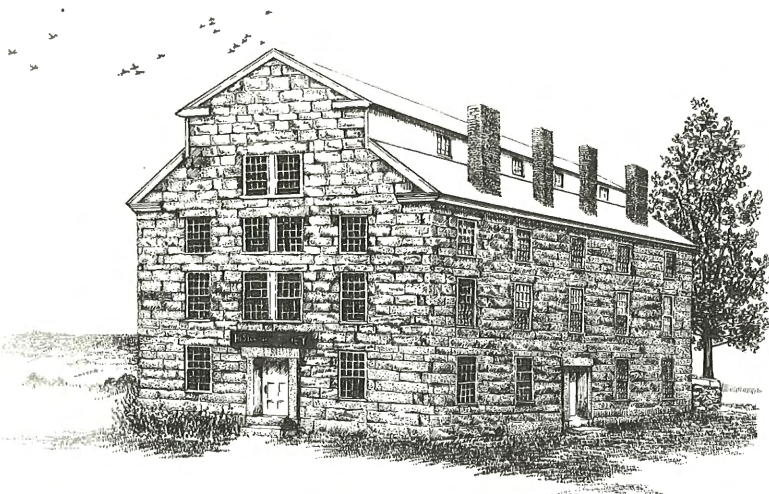
Just south on the Hinman Settler Road is the Orleans County Grammar School building. Built in 1823, it was paid for by William Baxter, a prominent town resident. Baxter stipulated that worship services be held on the second floor of the school until a permanent church could be built.

Originally the building stood at the base of Prospect Hill on what was then the town common. It had a belfry, but no porch. In 1869, the schoolhouse was moved to its present location. Today the building is owned by the town and houses Brownington Grange Hall.

Alexander Twilight & Samuel Read Hall

Brownington was home to two figures of national historic significance: Alexander Lucius Twilight (1795-1857), the first person of black ancestry to graduate from an American college (Middlebury, 1823), or to serve in a state legislature (Vermont House of Representatives, 1836); and Samuel Read Hall (1795-1877), a pioneer in the field of education, who introduced the use of the blackboard to the American classroom (Rumford, Maine, 1816), founded the first teacher-training or "normal" school (Concord, Vermont, 1823) and published the first teacher-training textbook in America (Andover, Massachusetts, 1829).

Both men were connected with the Orleans County Grammar School, which was established in Brownington in 1823 and was, for years, the only secondary school in the county.



Museum Hours

11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

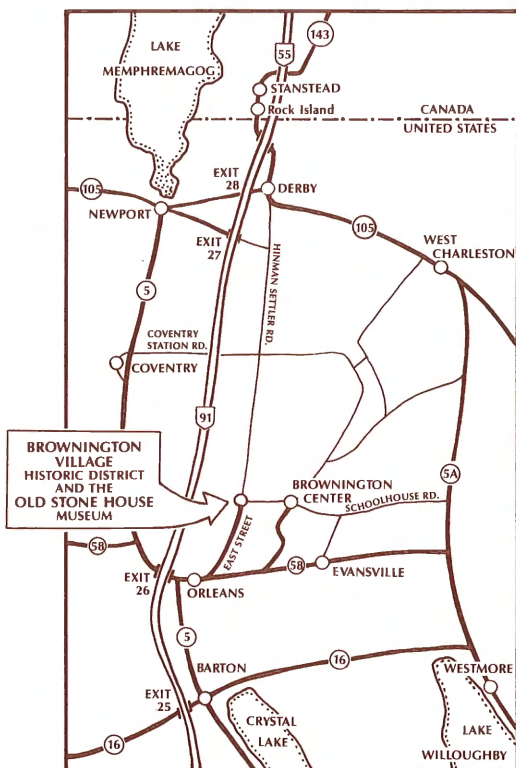
Open Wednesday through Sunday

May 15 - October 15th

Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

The Museum Shop is open during regular museum hours and features historical publications, traditional crafts and old-time toys.

Visit www.oldstonehousemuseum.org for information and registration for adult classes in small scale agriculture and traditional crafts, children's programs and special events.



Members are admitted to the Museum free of charge.

Group rates are available with advance reservations.

To inquire about membership or to schedule a group tour, please call the museum office at (802) 754-2022.

For more information, visit the Museum's web site at www.oldstonehousemuseum.org

Orleans County Historical Society, Inc.

Old Stone House Museum

109 Old Stone House Road, Brownington, VT 05860

E-mail: information@oldstonehousemuseum.org